



australian nursing federation

national news - october 2010

> Industrial Advisory Committee

The Industrial Advisory Committee (IAC) met in Melbourne on 29 September. Matters discussed at the meeting included: pay equity, LHMU low paid bargaining application, bargaining in medical practices, the future of state registered unions and the ANF agreement and award database.

> Practice Nurse Workshop

A meeting of practice nurses principally employed in Victoria was held at the ANF Victorian Branch on 28 September. The meeting, held in consultation with the Australian Practice Nurses Association, was organised to discuss ways to advance the enterprise bargaining interests of practice nurses employed in medical practices. The meeting was well attended with over 50 nurses participating. The workshop discussed options available under the Fair Work Act and also gave some initial consideration to the scope and content of a career classification structure for nurses. It was resolved that if there is adequate interest similar workshops may be held in other states and territories.

> Paid parental leave

The ACTU has been providing periodical information features and operation of the new commonwealth paid parental leave scheme. Contact your Branch for further information.

> Right of Entry Rules clarified

Union access to workplaces and their associated legal rights to convene meetings of members and potential members have been the subject of two potentially significant decisions both in the FWA and the federal court. They can be accessed at www.fwa.gov.au/decisionssigned/html/2010fwa6737.htm and www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/cth/FCA/2010/989.html

> Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO) Pay and Conditions Guides

The Fair Work Ombudsman has prepared Pay and Conditions Guides in relation to approximately 45 nursing pre reform awards and NAPSAS. The guides are designed to provide information on the transitional arrangements, identifying the minimum wages, penalties, loadings and allowances applicable as a result of the transition to the new Nurses Award. Of particular interest will be the translation re the classifications between the two awards. Rates of pay are current from 1 July 2010 reflecting transitional arrangements and also include separate calculations for casual hourly rates. Access is through the FWO website: www.fairwork.gov.au.

> Scholarships Stakeholder meeting

Royal College of Nursing, Australia (RCNA) convened a meeting of stakeholders in Canberra on 3 September 2010 to administer the newly constituted national nursing scholarships scheme. The ANF Federal Office attended and provided advice on aspects of the suite of programs within the new scheme. The ANF has shown a strong commitment to the national nursing scholarship programs since their inception in the 1990s, investing significant staff time in selection and advisory committee work, to ensure optimal benefit of these Australian Government funded scholarships to the nursing and midwifery professions. The ANF indicated at the meeting its desire for continuing this high level of support for and engagement in the scholarship programs.

> Australian Health Informatics Education Council (AHIEC)

The ANF continues to support the work of this group by providing the perspective of the nursing and midwifery professions on the development of education relating to informatics. Specific issues dealt with in a meeting held on 27 September 2010 were:

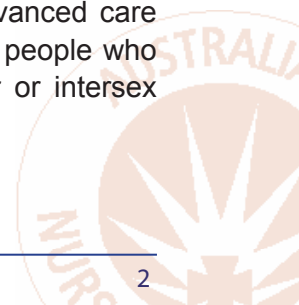
- strategies for lobbying particular groups about the work of the Council;
- a draft brief for a series of education workshops to be held across the country to improve awareness of health informatics (HI) as a field of knowledge and occupation, and the need for a HI and eHealth skilled workforce in the current Australian context and thus the importance for a national approach to HI education; and
- review of a document on competencies required of health professionals, health informaticians, and informatics specialists.

> Department of Veterans' Affairs Clinical Reference Group

The ANF is represented on a new clinical reference group formed by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) to assist with implementation of the *Preventable Admissions and Improved Community Care Program* through the provision of advice on clinical issues relating to the program. It is anticipated this program for a targeted group of DVA clients will commence in May 2011. The program, aimed at veterans with particular chronic conditions, was included in the 2010/11 Federal Budget. It will be implemented through the general practice team with a specific co-ordination role for general practice nurses or DVA contracted community nurses. This is an exciting initiative which has the potential to deliver improved community care services and health outcomes for veterans with chronic conditions, complex care needs and who are at risk of hospitalisations or who have experienced repeated hospitalisations. The ANF is working with the Australian Practice Nurses Association on this committee. Further information can be found on the DVA website at: http://www.dva.gov.au/health_and_wellbeing/health_programs/preventable/Pages/preventable_admission.aspx

> NSW Nurses Association Aged Care Forum

The NSWNA held an Aged Care Nurses Forum on Friday 3 September in Camperdown, Sydney. A national aged care update was given by Lee Thomas, ANF Federal Secretary. This update included the latest information on the Productivity Commission Review into Care of Older Australians and the ANF national Because We Care campaign. This was followed by sessions on professional and industrial matters in aged care; recruiting new graduates into aged care; advanced care planning; and caring for older people who are gay, lesbian, transgender or intersex



in residential aged care. The final session was a panel discussion on medicines issues in residential aged care dealing with current legislation, guidelines and the roles and responsibilities for service providers, nurses and care staff.

> Promotion of Therapeutic Goods Working Group

The ANF is a member of a working group chaired by the Medical Technology Association of Australia at the request of the Australian Government to look at existing health professional and industry codes relating to the promotion of therapeutic goods, and to consider improved regulatory processes. The second meeting of the group was held in Sydney on 1 September 2010 to commence work on developing high level principles which will apply across all therapeutic industry sectors. The aim is to provide for a greater measure of protection of the public regarding the use of devices and medicines used in health care. A further meeting at the end of September has continued this work.

> Health Workforce Australia – Clinical Supervisor Support Program Discussion Paper

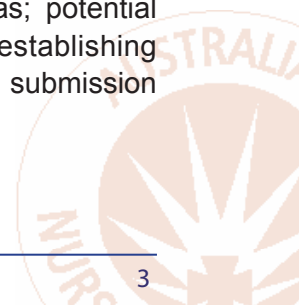
The ANF Federal Office participated in the consultation process conducted by Health Workforce Australia (HWA) in relation to their proposal for a Clinical Supervisor Support Program (CSSP). ANF Federal Office staff attended stakeholder forums held in Melbourne and Canberra to provide feedback on the CSSP Discussion Paper and then provided a written submission. Although generally supportive of the HWA proposed policy options in relation to developing a consistent framework for all registered health professionals the ANF also urged HWA to proceed with work on the clinical supervision requirements of the enrolled nurse and the unlicensed health worker (however titled). The full submission can be found at: www.anf.org.au under 'Submissions'.

> Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (ACMHN)

The ACMHN held its 36th international conference in Hobart 30 August to 2 September 2010. The ANF Federal Office representatives engaged with delegates through our trade table where we were able to distribute copies of the June edition of the ANJ which carried a special feature on mental health. The conference was well attended and delegates were treated to a wide range of issues critical to mental health nursing practice and to addressing raising the profile of mental health needs in our community. The Orator, Social Inclusion Commissioner for Tasmania, Professor David Adams called for innovation in community planning to promote better mental health outcomes for our citizens. Dr Kerry-Reid Searl presented an incredibly innovative approach to teaching communication skills to undergraduate nursing students; Professor Patrick McGorry (Australian of the Year) spoke about a 21st century approach to mental health care; and Timothy Wand outlined the challenges of his work as a mental health nurse practitioner in NSW. Podcasts of these presentations and those of other keynote speakers will soon be available on the ACMHN website: www.acmhn.org.

> Australian General Practice Network Boundary Modelling Project – Framework for the development of Primary Health Care Organisations in Australia

The ANF Federal Office has prepared a submission to the Department of Health and Ageing for their consultation process on the development work on potential boundaries for Medicare Locals/Primary Health Care Organisations (PHCOs). The submission addresses issues around: principles for determining boundaries for Medicare Locals/PHCOs; optimum number of PHCOs; cross border areas; potential barriers or difficulties in establishing boundaries for PHCOs. The submission



outlines the ANFs critical interest in the infrastructure development of primary health care organisations (PHCOs) in terms of the composition of the health professional workforce, clinical leadership, the basis for boundaries, and, importantly, the range of services available and readily accessible to meet health and aged care needs of the community.

> **International Nurse Practitioner / Advanced Practice Nurse Network Conference**

The 6th INP/APNN Conference was held in Brisbane from 8-11 September 2010. Around 400 delegates from Australia and overseas attended the conference, which was hosted by RCNA and the Australian College of Nurse Practitioners on behalf of the INP/APN Network. The conference was opened by Rosemary Bryant, Chief Nurse and Midwifery Officer of Australia and President of the International Council of Nurses. Presentations commenced with an address by guest speaker Adjunct Professor Sally Goold, Executive Director of the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses (CATSIN) on the many challenges facing Indigenous Australians and Indigenous nurses. Keynote addresses were given by speakers from: South Africa; USA; Canada; United Kingdom; Netherlands; Singapore and Australia. Nurse practitioners and advanced practice nurses are experiencing great progress in many countries around the world while others still face an ongoing struggle to be heard and recognised.

Topics for the panel forums included: ethico-legal issues; research influencing policy; advanced nursing education; and prescribing issues. A range of national and international issues were raised and tackled during the panel discussions and concurrent sessions. The findings of the Australian nurse practitioner study (AUSPRAC) were presented by the lead Chief Investigator,

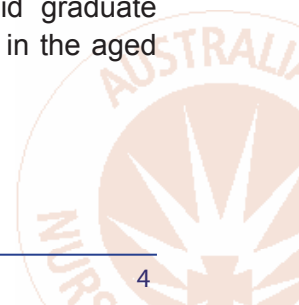
Professor Glenn Gardner. The three year study has monitored the role of nurse practitioner service in Australia. The study findings support workforce reform to better utilise the role of the nurse practitioner in Australia. The conference helped to showcase the growth and development of nurse practitioners in Australia.

The 7th INP/APNN Conference will be held in London, England from 20-22 August 2012.

> **Productivity Commission Aged Care Nursing Round Table**

The ANF was invited to participate in the Productivity Commission Aged Care Nursing Roundtable in September 2010. The group represented aged care providers, in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote, educational providers and nursing organisations.

The discussions centred on how different approaches to providing care in community and residential settings and how current workforce issues would be overcome. Most participants agreed that if there was a significant shift of care into the community there would need to be an accreditation process to ensure care was delivered by appropriately educated health professionals. Further discussion included the need for the aged care workforce to be managed by a registered nurse within residential aged care facilities. It was agreed that a framework for the aged care workforce is developed which includes the qualifications required for the different classifications of health professional, including assistants in nursing, horizontal and vertical career pathways and options for further education. It was agreed that 'on the job' training was a backward step and that good clinical placements for undergraduates, a curriculum that had a gerontology focus and solid graduate nurse programs were needed in the aged care sector.



E-health was also discussed and some providers said where IT technology had been introduced, there had been good uptake by the staff. Technology was not seen as a way to reduce employees, but rather as a way of attracting and retaining younger nurses and AIN's in the aged care sector.

Wage relativity was on the agenda. Most participants agreed that to attract registered nurses and enrolled nurses the pay needed to be equal to their acute sector colleagues.

> **Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA)**

A submission was made by the ANF to the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) on the provision for nurses to hold both registration as an enrolled nurse and as a registered nurse concurrently. The NMBA sought input from stakeholders in relation to this provision as it was not consistent across jurisdictions prior to the introduction of the National Law. The ANF supports registration as an enrolled nurse and a registered nurse concurrently for an unlimited period in special circumstances. The full submission can be found at: www.anf.org.au under 'Submissions'.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "lee".

LEE THOMAS
Federal Secretary



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yvonne".

YVONNE CHAPERON
Assistant Federal Secretary

For more information about any of the above items contact your ANF state or territory Branch, the NSW Nurses Association (ANF NSW Branch) or the Queensland Nurses Union (ANF QLD Branch).